

Congressman John Barrow (GA-12) today continued his efforts to protect factory workers from the dangers posed by combustible dust by introducing legislation that would require the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue rules regulating combustible industrial dusts in the workplace.

“I visited the Imperial Sugar facility last week and saw the steps they've taken to improve their facility. But thousands of other factory workers around the country are at risk of a similar disaster,” said Congressman Barrow. “Other manufacturers need to improve their safety programs as well. That’s why I introduced a bill in the House today that will finally provide our factory workers with the protections they deserve.”

[The Worker Protection Against Combustible Dust Explosions and Fires Act \(H.R. 522\)](#) is the first piece of legislation Congressman Barrow has introduced in the new Congress. The bill will require the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue rules regulating combustible industrial dusts, like sugar dust, that can build up to hazardous levels and explode.

OSHA has begun the process of adopting such rules, but under existing law it will take years for the agency to complete the rule making process, despite the fact that the dangers of combustible dust have been well known for years. Barrow’s legislation gives the agency fast-track rulemaking authority so that critical protections regarding worker safety can and will be implemented sooner rather than later.

Congressman Barrow’s legislation has previously passed the House of Representatives, but was never brought up for a vote by the Senate.

Barrow concluded: “Worker safety is an issue that transcends partisan lines. It’s time to act together, pass this bill, and send it to the President to sign into law.”

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Contact: Christopher Cashman, 202-225-2823
christopher.cashman@mail.house.gov